



BACKGROUND

The United Nations General Assembly, with support from the Governments of the Netherlands and Tajikistan, will convene the UN 2023 Water Conference in New York from 22 to 24 March 2023.

Billions of people worldwide still live without safely managed drinking water and sanitation, even though access to both services has long been defined as a human right. Many water sources are becoming more polluted, and ecosystems that provide water are disappearing. Climate change is disrupting the water cycle, causing droughts and floods.

The Conference – formally known as the 2023 Conference for the Midterm Comprehensive Review of Implementation of the UN Decade for Action on Water and Sanitation (2018-2028) – is the most important water event in a generation.

The primary aim of the Conference is to raise awareness of the global water crisis and decide on concerted action to achieve the internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Water is everyone's business, and the Conference is inclusive and cross-sectoral.

With many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) off track, progress in implementation of Goal 6 (water and sanitation) is key to the achievement of other SDGs, particularly on health, food, gender equity, education, livelihoods, industry, climate and the environment.

The Conference will adopt the Water Action Agenda as a main outcome, which represents commitments of countries and stakeholders. The Agenda will help mobilize action across countries, sectors and stakeholders to meet the global water-related goals and targets.

The Water Action Decade, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly to help put a greater focus on water, commenced on World Water Day, 22 March 2018, and runs through World Water Day, 22 March 2028. The Decade aims to advance the sustainable development and integrated management of water resources for the achievement of social, economic and environmental objectives through cooperation and partnership at all levels.

The last UN conference on water was held in 1977 in Mar del Plata, Argentina.